"The safest place for a cache is on an island close to shore, where foxes, wolves and wolverines cannot reach it in summer across the water. Wolverines, the most destructive of all the animals in the north, are fairly numerous at the mouth of the Coppermine river; consequently the natives of that region cache their goods on one of the Moore islands, and cross by sled to the mainland before the ice breaks up, which usually takes place some time in June. In the spring of 1914 some of the Noahognik Eskimos cached their possessions on Chantry island; and in 1916 Ikpakhuak and others used the island at the entrance of Bernard harbour for the same purpose. Ikpakhuak stored his blubber there while the ice was still solid, but left his clothing till June, when he ferried it across on his kayak. On the mainland the Eskimos choose as far as possible places that are least accessible to animals; for instance, in 1915, at Cape Wollaston, in Bathurst inlet, they left a cache on top of a huge crag so steep and high that not even a wolverine could scale its sides. Crags such as this, however, are rare, and most of the Eskimos' caches are simply built up with boulders, while articles of stone and wood, which cannot be damaged by beasts of prey, are left exposed on the surface. Thus in 1914 we found some caches of the Noahognik Eskimos at the fishing creek near Bernard harbour. There were four boards resting on the ground, and, on top of them, a soapstone lamp and a wooden bowl, the latter weighed down with stones to keep it from being blown away. Near them were three stone cairns. One enclosed

a large poke full of blubber; in the second we could see only a few sticks. The interior of the third was not visible at all, but inserted upright between the [122] stones were four sealing harpoons. A few yards away there were three coal-oil cans and a couple of sticks lying together on the ground. The sleds and heavy spring tents of these natives had been left at a lake a few miles inland.

Often the tribes partially break up as soon as their blubber caches are made, though the full disbandment does not take place till early summer. Many families even break off while the main body is still sealing on the ice, as there are many different hunting and fishing grounds, and every man is free to choose his own. In every region there are certain well-known highways that lead into the interior, and the native naturally makes his caches at the entrance to the one which leads to the particular district that he has chosen for his summer home; then in the fall he returns by the same route. The spring cache-sites therefore are often the same as the winter assembling-places. Thus the Akulliakattak natives cache their things at Lake Akulliakattak, and the Coppermine natives on one or other of the islands off the mouth of the Coppermine river. But in some tribal areas there is more than one highway into the interior, and so more than one potential cache-site. Different families will then make their caches in different places, so the group splits up while the natives are still living on the sea-ice. In the fall the families usually return first to their caches, then later, all unite in one common assembling-place."

2: Stefansson--67-68 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 488, 221

"In Coronation Gulf there are certain small islands upon which all sorts of household belongings can be safely left for the summer and everywhere the greater part of the property of a family is left behind in early spring, although [68] the cache may be nothing safer than a heap of stones which a polar bear might easily break into. Polar bears, however, are exceedingly rare, and thus the danger is really not very grave."